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11 February 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Bross

SUBJECT : Topics for Consideration (PFIAB)

1. It seems to me that the interests of both the Community and the PFIAB would be best served if we could identify those matters, problem areas, issues, situations, or call them what you will, that would be uniquely appropriate for the PFIAB to tackle. After all, it is of little help to have such a group of distinguished individuals simply kikitizing on or duplicating the efforts of others who also look at the Community as a whole, as does the BOB, in part as does the DCI, or individually as does the IG's within the organizations that make up the Community.

2. In line with the above, I offer the following possibilities:

a. What activities should be branded as a part of the U.S. foreign intelligence effort and specifically, which of them should be included within the area of responsibility of the DCI and the USIB? At present, the decision as to what will be stamped "intelligence" in the first place, or considered as being within the DCI's area of responsibility is left entirely to the whim and fancy of those engaged in the activity. It would be years, if ever, that we might obtain a consensus on this problem within the USIB. On the other hand, it would make good sense for the PFIAB to have a look at the matter and then make an appropriate recommendation to the President.

b. The issue of "Political Risk" vs the need for intelligence information is a particularly appropriate one for the PFIAB to have a go at. What should be the procedure whereby a decision can be reached at the highest level necessary on those situations where action to meet a high priority intelligence requirement cannot be mounted because of a policy

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restriction which can, in some cases, be nothing more than the whim of an individual ambassador. The PFIAB might consider the feasibility of a procedure whereby consideration of all risk factors including political, would be built-in to the process of establishing the priority of an intelligence need and that the decision to classify an intelligence requirement as having the "highest priority" would include acceptance of the risks that would have to be taken to meet it.

c. The current fetish for cost effectiveness, comparative values, tradeoffs, etc., and the so-called dialogues and interfaces through which we are expected to pay homage to this modern day golden calf, have brought about a situation in the Community where an intelligence requirement that cannot be tied to an identifiable and present danger to national security, gets no standing at all. The Community collectively or individually is hard put to fight this issue because it would be accused of promoting vested interests, seeking aggrandizement, and so on. The PFIAB on the other hand could re-examine the concept that any country's intelligence effort has a basic requirement to have at least the nucleus of a capability on the ground and ready to go in every single country in the world, and that for this reason there really is a floor below which we cannot afford to go no matter what it costs.


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